

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Local and International Newspapers'  
Writings on The Riots in a Middle Eastern Country

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**Abstract**

In addition to capturing the hearts and minds of Iraqis, the protest movement that ousted Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi—who held office from October 2018 to May 2020—also attracted the attention of both domestic and international media. The purpose of the study is to find out if the four selected newspapers employ language that supports their ideological agendas. It also aims to look at the ways in which local Iraqi newspapers and international newspapers discussed the same protest events that began on October 1, 2019. Over 30,000 people were injured, 3,000 people were arrested, and an estimated 1,000 people died as a result of the demonstrations, marches, civil disobedience, sit-ins, rioting, and online activism that took place during these events. According to the study, the national newspapers Al-Sabaah and Al-Mada regularly overstated the violent activities of protesters. Al-Sabaah appeared to rely on official information at the expense of speaking for protestors, but Al-Mada did not. Furthermore, it omitted information regarding all parties involved. By using particular sources and referencing them directly, exposing the black and white aspects of both sides involved in the dispute, and adopting the side of the protestors and portraying them favorably, The Telegraph and The New York Times, on the other hand, adhered to nonviolent journalism.

**Keywords:** Ideology, Discourse Analysis, The West, Western Press, Non-Western Press, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

## 1. Introduction

There is no denying the importance of media in today's society. The way we see and comprehend the world around us is influenced and dominated by many media, all of which speak in a particular language. It unquestionably possesses the ability to mold and influence our responses, attitudes, and beliefs in the society we live in. Newspapers are more than just means of disseminating information. Aspects of the news are given to the reader, frequently in a way meant to influence their ideological position (Reah, 2002, p. 50). In addition to its various sub-branches including mass communication, periodicals, TV series, and of course its original form, newspapers, media is a multidisciplinary field.

Newspaper discourse is thought to be the most significant discourse type, similar to the variety of discourse kinds found in media discourse. Two characteristics that set the newspaper discourse apart from other media discourses are evident. The first thing that strikes us is the wide range of textual communication styles that are used in newspaper discourse, including news, advertisements, entertainment, commentary, and analysis. Second, despite the fact that it includes literary or fictitious discourse such as signed articles and short tales, it is presented as nonliterary. These two factors are the reasons why "Newspaper discourse displays several kinds of language and is stylistically very eclectic" (Khalil 2000, p. 22).

The language used in newspaper discourse is crucial in conveying information and forming the mental images of various societies. The words and phrases selected by

the writer or editor of an article hold great significance and can be interpreted and comprehended in various ways.

The fact that newspaper stories do contain personal bias is a significant component in comprehending the study of the writing process. For this reason, the press as a whole is seen as a model of the systemic mediation of the world that has been recognized in all discourses. Because of this, it is true that the press shapes our ideologies through its depictions of the economy and culture. (Fowler, 1991; Reah, 2002). According to Fowler (1991), The press plays a unique role in shaping and controlling a person's opinions. On the one hand, the press is crucial to the formation of ideas, but it also depends on political and economic environments. On the other hand, its expression and function define the worldview.

What matters now is that the majority of newspapers worldwide are owned by specific political parties or organizations, and as such, they reflect the political preferences of their proprietors. The public is exposed to these newspapers' proprietors' ideology and opinions, which they attempt to apply. Reah (2002) added that the ownership of newspapers and press in general is regarded as an important factor in the existence of the free press. The owner has the power and the right to regulate and change the content of the paper, its political orientations, and its perspectives. Generally speaking, critical discourse analysis (CDA) in comparison to other methods has been applied in performing media discourse. "Critical discourse analysis is viewed as a sort of discourse analytical research that analyzes how: social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted via text and talk in the social and political context" (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 352). One of the most important tools in media discourse is

manipulation. It means "deceiving one's addressees by persuading them of something that is foremost in one's own interest through the covert employment of communication technologies that are not in agreement with generally accepted critical standers of reasonableness" (Eemeren, 2005, p. 12). This notion of manipulation is regarded as a social power abuse. It controls the readers' perspective and understanding so that studying its effect is very important in order to understand and analyze the manipulative discourse (Van Dijk, 2006, p. 359).

## 2. Literature Review

The CDA party which was formed in the 1970's made it possible to share the ideas of its members to everyone. And the result is that we have a number of approaches present in CDA.

For example, the Three-Dimensional Approach of Fairclough, the Socio-Cognitive Approach of Van Dijk, the Discourse-Historical Approach of Wodak, and the Actor's Interpretation Approach of Theo van Leeuwen, etc. (Wodak and Meyer, 2001, p. 6-9). While a number of CD analysts, such as Gunter Kress and Ron Scollon, shifted their priorities and moved away from the field, they were replaced by other approaches that either incorporated or established the old hypotheses. CDA methods have changed dramatically since 1991, but are still applicable in many ways (Wodak and Meyer, 2008, p. 3). The following sections address the key CDA methods and detail the approaches relating to this review.

Van Dijk is a prominent figure in CDA and his approach 'Sociocognitive approach' (SCA) is one of the important approaches to be studied. Van Dijk (2002, p. 203) points out that language use, discourse, verbal interaction, and communication' are

aspects related to the social organization's micro-level, whereas 'power, dominance, and inequality between social groups' are related to the analytical macro-level. So, for these two stages of study, there must be a point of contact. Yet he found that there was a 'missing link' between the micro and macro layers of analysis (or between society and discourse) as he extended his theory to media texts.

This missed link was later identified as cognition. Discourse is also an intricate communicative event that includes participants' social meaning and perception and development processes (van Dijk, 1988, p. 2). CDA thus becomes 'a reaction against the dominant formal, often 'asocial' or 'uncritical' paradigms of the 1960s and 1970s' (van Dijk, 1998, p. 4).

Therefore, van Dijk's approach incorporates three aspects, unlike conventional DA approaches: discourse analysis, cognitive analysis, and social analysis. The first is a text-based study in which initial text types are studied in terms of grammar, morphology, lexicon, etc. In order to explore how rhetoric can be used to modify perception, the second aspect is introduced by van Dijk to be the relation between social and textual aspects. The last aspect is a context-based study that analyzes the whole social system (van Dijk, 2015, p. 64). However, in CDA, the critical components of the SCA (discourse, cognition and society) are not viewed individually; they are combined because they are an important aspect of multidisciplinary research.

**Table. 2.1.**

*The organization of the sociocognitive approach of discourse (adapted from van Dijk, 2015, p. 71)*

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Level of structure	Cognition	Society
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Macro	Socially shaped knowledge, Attitudes, ideologies, norms, values	Communities, groups, organizations
Micro	Personal mental modes of (experience of) social members	Interaction/discourse social members.

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Van Dijk (2002, p. 203) puts particular focus on ideology, arguing that debate, perception, and culture should be interdisciplinary. This focus stems from the idea that social influence is a mechanism that can be used to manipulate community members' thoughts and behaviors.

This serves to maintain and emphasize that there are no reasons for the out-group, and that it is 'always like that' and 'we're not used to that' (Ibid, p. 264). Van Dijk differentiates between personal or episodic memory and collective memory in terms of cognition. The first is known to be the special knowledge and personal experiences and viewpoints acquired by people during their lives, and is split into 'mental models' and 'context models'. The second category is social representations, such as the larger and more intangible socio-cultural knowledge, views or attitudes exchanged with each other by members of a group (1998, p. 10).

Discursive mind control is thus the control over others' mental models and/or social representations (van Dijk, 2005, p. 95). The SCA is used to demonstrate how discourse influences the thinking of other members of the group in favor of the dominant groups and against the controlled groups and how the nature of discourse can affect the development and alteration of mental models (Ibid, p. 11). Bearing some meaning, the hypothesis has recently been used by many scholars. Chilton (Wodak and Chilton, 2005,

p. 23) is one of those scholars who claims that it is the most lucid solution to CDA because it recognizes the human mind's processes when it comes to coping with social and political behavior, which is mainly verbal action (Ibid, p. 30).

The CDA method is still in its early stages, and new tactics are being designed all the time. Researchers used it from various perspectives, therefore there is no one framework for conducting CDA studies, although many core notions are shared by all methodologies. Many academics have questioned CDA; some critiques concerned with its approach, while others' main concern was with its theoretical basis. CDA data collection was identified by Stubbs as something frequently restricted to text portions and CDA strategies as inexplicit (Stubbs, 1997). CDA was criticized by Widdowson as well for being led by political rather than verbal cues. He claimed that Analysis in support of theory takes second place to interpretation in support of belief (Widdowson, 1995). He opposes that CDA is basically unprincipled, the analyst of CDA is accused of borrowing from theory, whichever theory is useful at the time. He criticizes CDA as well for its disregard of difficult textual characteristics, and contends that CDA employs terminology such as ideology and power in an ambiguous manner (Widdowson, 1998, p. 137).

Despite the criticism of the CDA, there is already a very valuable analytical solution to the research in hand. The CDA approach is a multidisciplinary method that provides a systemic link between discourse and the social reality, it focuses on topics such as inequality, the access to / lack of access to language and other assets. This study presents a crucial political problem that effects millions of people in the Middle East and around the globe. Discursive coverage of the mainstream media dispute has a major influence on conflict understanding and the perspectives and behavior of the concerned

parties. The methodology that ties the discourse to the social is therefore considered most relevant for the current study; furthermore, the links between discourse and geographical, political and socio-cultural contexts are highly important for the understanding and clarification of the discursive phenomena under investigation. The Iraqi protests is a very sensitive and crucial topic with far-reaching impacts on the world today. A multi-disciplinary methodology such as CDA is required to gain an appropriate interpretation of its discursive representation. This chapter presents a theoretical view of CDA as an empirical environment for study. The history of CDA was provided, its core methods, implementations and criticisms.

Al-Jayrudy (2011) created a thesis on a similar line in which she studied stories from the English and Arabic News in terms of the use of Theme and Rheme, nominalization and lexical variation. In the news stories in English and Arabic, she reflected on how certain terms were used to suggest such philosophies. Al-Jayrudy notes that in Syria's presentations in both English and Arabic news reports, the model she created as well as the principles she chose could help define underlying agendas.

### 3. Materials

The study of the reproduction of discourse, particularly in the media, was the subject of CDA scholars due to its significance as a sociological project (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 13). Today, the effect of the media is more involved and powerful in shaping the facts and influencing the way people think about reality. Today, people's opinions and decisions are based on what they see and hear in the media.



In this respect, one of the most important events that has taken place during the last year is the Iraqi protests crisis and the excessive force that these protests were faced by. This topic has been reproduced over and over on numerous media outlets, such as newspapers, television, the Social Media, etc. Any of these outlets addresses the struggle in a manner that fits its own agenda, values, ideologies and attitudes. They therefore look at the same conflict from different angles, using different scopes.

The data was collected through the selection of (10) articles on the latest Iraqi protests in each of the mentioned newspapers, *The New York Times*, *The Telegraph*, *The Al-Mada*, and *The Al-Sabah*. These articles are collected from the official website of *NY Times* ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)), *Telegraph* ([www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)), *Al-Mada* (<https://almadapaper.net/>), and *Al-Sabaah* (<https://alsabaah.iq>). Specifically, the researcher focuses on the perspective of the two chosen international newspapers and the two local ones. That is to say, the researcher analyzed (10) news stories in each newspaper, which were released at the time of the protests and the killings of more than 1,000 innocent Iraqi citizens.

The study was developed to find how Iraqi and International newspapers presented the news coverage of the Iraqi protests. The study consists of 40 items of newspaper articles.

### 3.1 The NY Times and The Telegraph

One newspaper from each country was chosen in this study: The New York Times and The Telegraph. Although it is very difficult to situate a newspaper around a political continuum, we can understand the publications' ideological stance in comparison

to those in their own country. Both of these prestigious newspapers fell into the same liberal mold (Hallin and Mancini, 2004) as they appear to have more liberal values than most newspapers in their own country.

In general, the New York Times is seen as more liberal in contrast with other US newspapers. The newspaper still plays an important part as a founding member of the elite press in the US and around the world. The US newspaper is uniformly known as an authoritative paper in foreign news coverage (Cohen, 1993). A number of previous reports have looked at the New York Times news coverage to see how US media view world problems and equate their coverage with other countries' media.

The Telegraph is also one of the most respected publications in the world and can be classified as a conservative publication within the British media system. The personal relationships between the paper's editors and the Conservative Party leadership, in conjunction with the paper's traditionally right-wing position and management's control of Conservative activists, have resulted in the paper being considered widely as the Torygraph, especially in Private Eye – a fortnightly British magazine. The newspaper remained true to the Conservatives even though Conservative popularity was seen to have slumped in opinion polling and Labor gained the ascendant. Since Labour removed the Conservatives from power by an electoral vote in 1997, and in the wake of Labour election gains in 2001 and the third consecutive Labour election victory in 2005, this allegiance persisted (Curtis, 2006).

### 3.2 Al-Mada and Al-Sabaah newspaper

These two local Iraqi newspapers have been chosen for the purpose of the study due to the large platform of readers they own and their large circulation. Al-Mada

newspaper was founded in 2003, its main office is in Baghdad, and it has other branches in Beirut and Damascus. It is considered as one of the most important independent newspapers in Iraq. It has been subjected to many governmental harassments, such as storming its headquarters. Detaining reports at its institutions, and attempts to obstruct its work, including:

- In 2007, a military force stormed a building belonging to Al-Mada newspaper in Baghdad and confiscated books, documents and brochures from the building after the newspaper's workers opened the doors to them following a threat to forcefully storm the building and seize what is in it.
- In 2011, the Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament, Osama al-Nujaifi, filed a lawsuit against Al-Mada newspaper, demanding compensation of 150 million Iraqi dinars. .
- In 2016, Fakhri Karim, the editor-in-chief of Al-Mada newspaper, appeared in court after a lawsuit filed by the Iraqi Vice President Nuri al-Maliki against the journalist Ali Hussein following an article criticizing al-Maliki's policies.
- In June 2016, the staff of Al-Mada satellite channel was beaten, insulted, and detained by police officers who prevented them from covering the protests in downtown Baghdad.

On the other hand, there is, Al-Sabaah Newspaper, which is an official Iraqi daily newspaper issued by the Iraqi Media Network, that deals with political, economic and technical news through its pages. It is based in Baghdad and was founded in 2003, Although the network is funded by public money, theoretically the government of Iraq has no authority over it.

### 3.3 Frame Analysis

This paper adheres to Entman's (1993) concept of frames that is the purpose of a frame is to highlight some characteristics of observed reality; as a result, a certain problem definition, causal interpretation, moral judgment, and/or therapy proposal are pushed (Entamn, 1993, p. 52). However, when it comes to news media frames, I am a great believer in Pan and Kosicki's (1993) description of news media frames as a cognitive apparatus employed for the decoding, interpretation, and hiring of information; communicable and linked to competent journalistic routines and conventions. Framing can be studied as a methodology for creating and processing news expression, or as a function of the discourse itself. (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 57).

This indicates that frames serve as internal mental structures and techniques entrenched in political speech (Kinder & Sanders, 1990, p. 74). If we applied this to a Richardson model (2007) in figure 2 in the CDA Phases section that will be discussed later, we would discover that frames can be utilized as instruments/tools for journalists to develop news discourses by picking one story or term over another and/or concentrating and deleting one view over another. At the moment, frames provide psychological stimulation to consumers or readers in order for them to guess the context of news pieces (Pan & Kosicki, 1993, p. 59).

This paper arrived at certain frames in the news items at hand by which the researcher integrated the theoretical components derived from McLeod and Hertog's five characteristics of the *protest paradigm* and to retrieve those frames, Pan and Kosicki's (1993) frame analysis was used. McLeod (2007) in his "*News Coverage and Social Protest: How the Media's Protest Paradigm Exacerbates Social Conflict*", identifies the

protest paradigm, which is the major hypothesis in his paper, as a collection of news coverage traits that define mainstream media coverage. This coverage frequently marginalizes demonstrators and obstructs their ability to speak out. to play an important role on the political stage. The demonstrators have been frustrated as a result of the media's lack of appreciation for the value of social protest, which has led to problematic conflicts (McLeod, 2007, p. 185). In the context of the protest paradigm, this paper has identified a number of frames. Those hypothetical frames, which are most likely to be encountered in national newspapers, are:

- Who began the violence and Chaos? Who is to blame? (Police vs. Protestors)
- Protest as being overlooked and ignored.
- Denouncing or applauding protests (Negative Lexicalization)
- Is the background missing or is it being provided? (Episodic vs. Thematic)

In this paper, the protester vs. police frame is expected to be the most central and important frame. According to McLeod (1995), the media is usually persistent about substituting the demonstrators' intended target for the police, which is usually a government or corporate organization. The usage of sources is being used to create bias towards the demonstrators' opponents, notably the police. Journalists in this case focus on law enforcement officers as well as other government representatives at the cost of demonstrators in their reportage, especially by the state owned newspapers.

#### 4. Results

In accordance with the study's main goal of exploring the used frames during the Iraqi protests in some national, American, and British newspapers, as well as tracing the

way the four newspapers in hand depicted the protesters, frame analysis attempted to bring new insights into discursive choices, as well as shedding light on the ideological, institutional, and political contexts of the Iraqi protests.

#### 4.1 The NY Times Reports

**Table 4.1.**

*The NY Times Reports on the Iraqi Protests*

No	Headline	Word Counts	Source, Date
1	Just simply give Us a Country: Thousands Protest Corruption in Iraq	864 words	Alissa J. Rubin and Falih Hassan, Oct. 2, 2019
2	'All of Them Are Thieves': Iraqis Defy Security Forces to Protest Corruption	1,356 words	<a href="#">Alissa J. Rubin</a> , Oct. 25, 2019
3	Iraqi Antigovernment Protests Grow, Part Battle Lines and Carnival	965 words	<a href="#">Alissa J. Rubin</a> , Oct. 28, 2019
4	Iraq Demonstrations Grow, and Government Scrambles to Respond	602 words	<a href="#">Alissa J. Rubin</a> , Nov. 1, 2019
5	The Fight for a New Iraq	1,202 words	Mina Al-Oraibi, Nov. 5, 2019
6	'Our Patience Is Over': Why Iraqis Are Protesting	1,779 words	<a href="#">Alissa J. Rubin</a> , Nov. 20, 2019

7	Violence is on the rise in Iraq's south, despite crackdowns on protests and the press	1,134 words	<a href="#">Alissa J. Rubin</a> and Falih Hassan, Nov. 28, 2019
8	Iraq in Worst Political Crisis in Years as Death Toll Mounts From Protests	1,304 words	<a href="#">Alissa J. Rubin</a> , Published Dec. 21, 2019, Updated Dec. 24, 2019
9	Iraq Police Crack Down on Protests as Influential Cleric Withdraws Support	1,048 words	<a href="#">Alissa J. Rubin</a> , Jan. 25, 2020
10	U.N. Documents Abductions and Torture Of Iraqi Protesters	758 words	<a href="#">Alissa J. Rubin</a> , Published May 23, 2020, Updated May 26, 2020

Now coming to analyze the first table we can see that they have used a direct and strong language in their headlines, they are obviously taking side with the protests and focusing on their despair and the number of the wounded and killed protesters. We can observe that the term “Crackdown” has been used many times in the headlines of the articles to focus on the chaos that happened during that time.

#### 4.2 The Telegraph Reports

**Table 4.2.**

*The Telegraph Reports on the Iraqi protests*

N o	Headline	Word Counts	Source, Date
1	Two killed as Baghdad erupts in protest and Iraqi troops use live fire	395 words	Oct. 1, 2019
2	Seven dead, dozens injured as anti-government protests in Iraq turn violent	451 words	Oct. 2, 2019

3	Iraqi protests: Moqtada al-Sadr, a powerful cleric, demands that the government quit as the death toll approaches 100.	995 words	Oct. 5, 2019
4	Iraqi special forces deploy to Baghdad after 60 protesters killed	346 words	<a href="#">Abbie Cheeseman</a> , Oct. 27, 2019
5	Iraq announces 'crisis cells' to crack down on protests after Iran consulate burned down	541 words	<a href="#">Josie Ensor</a> , Nov. 28, 2019
6	Two police officers killed as Iraq protests break out again	415 words	Jan. 20, 2020
7	Thousands of Iraqis join protests despite cleric Moqtada Al-Sadr asking them to go home	676 words	<a href="#">Gareth Browne</a> , Jan. 26, 2020
8	Despite the nomination of a new 'independent' prime minister, anti-government protests in Iraq continue.	338 words	Feb. 2, 2020
9	Young protester shot dead as Iraq's anti-government demonstrations are plunged back into violence	455 words	<a href="#">James Rothwell</a> , May. 11, 2020
10	Iraqi youth shot dead during protests was victim of militia group with Iran links	530 words	<a href="#">James Rothwell</a> , May. 12, 2020

The first report by the Telegraph is titled '*Two killed as Baghdad erupts in protest and Iraqi troops use live fire*'. It emphasizes the issue of violence acts by the government against unarmed protestors in Iraq which has been the most serious issue that took the lives of more than 600 hundred protestors. So it is clear that according to who began the violence frame, the police is the one to be blamed.



Concerning the other frame of protest being overlooked and ignored, here in this report their role was not mentioned as much it was in the previous reports by the NY Times. The focus here was on the acts of the military forces.

As for the third frame, denouncing or applauding protests, the reporter has mentioned that these innocent protestors were suffering from the oppression of the government *“We want this government to be changed. This is a government of political parties and militias.”*

The last frame which is regarding providing the background of the protests, we see that the report has mentioned one of the reasons of the protests, which is unemployment *“According to the World Bank, young unemployment in Iraq is over 25%.”* And as well as mentioned that Iraq has been suffering from corruption for more than 18 years *“According to official calculations, about \$450 billion in public funds have gone into the coffers of politicians and businesspeople since 2004, a year after the US-led invasion that deposed tyrant Saddam Hussein.”*

#### 4.3The Al-Sabaah Reports

**Table 4.3.**

*The Al-Sabaah Reports on the Iraqi Protests*

N o	Headline	Word Counts	Source, Date
1	The Martyrs Foundation: an operations room to complete the transactions of the martyrs of the demonstrations	321 words	Wafaa Amer, Baghdad, Oct. 22, 2019

2	A tribute to the awareness of citizens and the role of security forces in maintaining peaceful demonstrations	709 words	AL-Sabaah Reporters, Baghdad, Oct. 28, 2019
3	There are no martyrs in the Karbala demonstrations ... and the Middle Euphrates: The situation is under control	646 words	AL-Sabaah Reporters, Baghdad, Oct. 29, 2019
4	Dhi Qar announces job opportunities and a lawsuit against the demonstrators is dropped	555 words	Hazim Mohammed Habib, An Nasiriya, Oct. 30, 2019
5	The Popular Mobilization confirms its support for the peaceful demonstrations	372 words	AL-Sabaah, Baghdad, Nov. 1, 2019
6	Demonstrations continue in the central and southern governorates	621 words	AL-Sabaah Reporters, Governorates, Nov. 4, 2019
7	Parliament dome prepares for an upcoming meeting with the coordination of the demonstrations	874 words	Omar Abid Al-lateef, Baghdad, Nov. 6, 2019
8	Babylon is preparing to receive unified demands from the demonstrations coordination	295 words	Jinan Al-asady, Babylon, Nov. 12, 2019
9	Calls for students and teachers to commit to their school attendance	562 words	AL-Sabaah, Baghdad, Nov. 20, 2019
10	After a relative calmness in Wasit .. Burning and closing of public institutions	769 words	AL-Sabaah, Baghdad, Jan. 13, 2020

Here it is quite clear from an analysis perspective that the local national newspaper the *Al-Sabaah* that is supposed to be the number one source of news for the most population of the country is against the protests and against the actions of the protestors, as we will see in the analysis of the report below. When some major event happens they tend to look the other way and publish instead some irrelevant information to manipulate the public and soften the difficult situation the protests have been undergoing. They used a quite calm and soft vocabulary in their headlines and the entire articles in praising the role of the government as we will see below.

#### 4.4 The Al-Mada Reports

**Table 4.4.**

*The Al-Mada Reports on the Iraqi Protests*

No	Headline	Word Counts	Source, Date
1	1,000 demonstrators arrested in the first days of the protest, more than half of them in Baghdad	٧٦٥ words	Al-Mada, Baghdad, Oct. 10, 2019
2	The religious authority holds the government responsible for killing and wounding of demonstrators in the protest fields	822 words	Al-Mada, Baghdad, Oct. 13, 2019
3	The coordination of the 25 <sup>th</sup> of October demonstrations proposes to "expel" the representatives and officials and reject the presence of the Sadrists	679 words	Al-Mada, Baghdad, Oct. 22, 2019
4	The tear gas has not left Tahrir square, and the victims are in the thousands	608 words	Al-Mada, Baghdad, Oct. 27, 2019
5	Demonstrators break the ban and stir the political scene	٥٨٢ words	Al-Mada, Baghdad, Oct. 30, 2019

6	Demonstrators force security forces to cut bridges connecting both sides of Baghdad	٦٣٩ words	Al-Mada, Baghdad, Nov. ٧, 2019
7	Security forces fail to disperse the demonstrators despite live ammunition and burning their tents	928 words	Al-Mada, Baghdad, Nov. 10, 2019
8	The security forces fail to regain Al-Ahrar bridge and severe penalties against those who have leaked plans to restrict the demonstrations	965 words	Al-Mada, Baghdad, Nov. 21, 2019
9	The political blocs start searching for an "exceptional alternative" on the eve of Abdul Mahdi's resignation in Parliament	563 words	Al-Mada, Baghdad, Dec. 1, 2019
10	The protest fields support Al-Kazemi's decisions to dismiss Khalaf and arrest "Thaar Allah": We await Abdul Mahdi's trial	573 words	Al-Mada, Baghdad, May. 13, 2020

For the sake of comparison between two local newspapers, showing how the private owned newspapers are more free to publish a whole different kind of articles and can comment on the events freely with more objectivity. Here I have chosen the *Al-Mada* newspaper as an example, it is a privately owned newspaper that does not belong to the government, unlike the previous newspaper, the *Al-Sabaah*.

#### 4.4. CDA Analysis

This study's research question is related to how the demonstrators were presented in the newspapers at hand and whether there were any differences between the International and Iraqi local press in portraying them, which corresponds to their ideological ideas and affiliation. In the same context, the paper tried to figure out how reporters came up with identities and connotations for Iraqi demonstrators, considering

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that identifying people is often a process of preference. We saw how the international press, especially The New York Times, was keen on mentioning and quoting demonstrators, mentioning their names and age and what they do for a living most of the times, while the local newspaper, Al-Sabaah did the opposite when it quoted the official military spokesmen and governmental figures and abandoned the protestors.

In the early days of the Iraqi protests, Al-Sabaah newspaper, which is a state-owned newspaper, referred to the protestors as "peaceful demonstrators". Then they were reassigned to "aggressive and violent occurrences", "brutal demonstrations", and "tragic events", among other things, where Iraq was plunged into "chaos". To put it in another way the demonstrators were represented negatively. However, most of the time, the negativity technique was used in an indirect manner. While on the other hand, the Al-Mada newspaper as well as the international press had depicted the protests positively. The terms "popular revolution", "martyrs of the revolution", and "sons of October's revolution" were all plainly stated in the Al-Mada news reports to support and provide a positive image of the protestors.

Both The New York Times and The Telegraph depicted the protestors in a positive manner. This strategy was used not only by utilizing a large number of sources from protestors and clearly expressing their legitimate requests, but also by utilizing a large number of resources from protestors and explicitly expressing everyone's valid requests, as well as through the identifying and referencing of demonstrators. Nonetheless, through the analysis that was done in the previous section we see that The Telegraph's coverage exhibited some neutrality when compared to The New York Times'.

Although most of us do not trust journalists, many of us still believe that we have a free and fair press. We should always be skeptical of the stories we read in the mass media, and to question what is presented in front of us. The news agenda is set by the billionaires who own the press. What specific stories are discussed and how they are written about are influenced by who controls the newspapers. The UK media is highly fragmented, with six billionaires holding and/or controlling a majority of voting interests in the majority of national UK newspapers as it is shown in the table below.

**Table 4.5.**

*Adapted from [Tom London](#)'s blog. Figures from data released by the National Readership Survey (NRS) in Nov 2016, based on data from [October 2015 – September 2016](#). Financial Times data from [their website](#) is PwC assured from November 2011 and is based on daily readership as weekly figures not public nor recorded by the NRS.*

UK national paper(s)	Effective owner(s)	Info on owner	Newspaper's political support General Election 2015	Weekly readership (print & online combined, removing duplicates)
Daily Mail & Mail on Sunday	Lord Rothermere	Billionaire. Lives in France. <a href="#">Tax avoider</a> .	Conservative	11,374,000
Metro	Lord Rothermere	See above.	No endorsement, but Conservatively aligned.	7,727,000
The Sun & Sun on Sunday	Rupert Murdoch	Billionaire. Lives in US. <a href="#">Tax avoider</a> .	Conservative except in Scotland where SNP	9,550,000
The Times &	Rupert Murdoch	See above.	Conservative	3,810,000

Sunday Times				
Express & Sunday Express	Richard Desmond	Billionaire. Lives in UK. <a href="#">Tax avoider.</a>	UKIP	3,521,000
Daily Star & Daily Star Sunday	Richard Desmond	See above.	No endorsement	2,405,000
Telegraph & Sunday Telegraph	David & Frederick Barclay	Billionaires. Live on private island under the jurisdiction of the <a href="#">tax haven Sark.</a>	Conservative	5,142,000
London Evening Standard	Alexander & Evgeny Lebedev	Alexander is a billionaire or close to it, ex-KGB and lives in Russia. His son, Evgeny lives in UK.	Conservative	4,179,000
The Independent	Alexander & Evgeny Lebedev	See above.	Conservative /Lib-Dem	1,710,000
Financial Times	Nikkei Inc.	Public Limited company.	Conservative / LibDem	2,200,000
Mirror & Sunday Mirror	Trinity Mirror plc	Public Limited Company.	Labour	6,216,000
Guardian & Observer	Scott Trust Ltd	Limited Company.	Labour	5,618,000
Daily Record & Sunday Mail	Trinity Mirror plc	Public limited company.	Labour	1,363,000

The role of the table above shows that most of these news outlets are privately owned by billionaires and those billionaires control what is printed in their newspapers accordingly to the political parties they support. So it is a way of manipulating the media.

True editorial integrity is always lacking in these publications. The owners have the ability – and always do – to influence what is written in their newspapers, which editors and writers are hired or fired, and which political parties the paper promotes.

With six billionaires owning the bulk of the voting stock of most of the UK's national newspapers, it is no surprise that they mainly backed the Conservatives in the last general election. The Conservatives have reduced the highest tax rate and plan to lower it even more, providing huge tax cuts to millionaires and billionaires. How much hope is there for legitimate political agendas to minimize wealth, wages, and power disparities, which still undermines the rights of the billionaires and corporations who own the newspapers, under the new media ownership structure?

As long as there is some kind of manipulation in the elections and the political parties that are being promoted in these newspapers, we can say the same about the latest events that happened in Iraq and how the UK press have spread the news to their audience all across the world.

## 5. Conclusion

In a conclusion, this study attempted to answer the research questions mentioned in the first chapter using methods of frame analysis and critical discourse analysis. Frame analysis was used to analyze each report of the two international newspapers (NY Times and The Telegraph) and the two local Iraqi newspapers (Al-Sabaah and Al-Mada). We found that the international newspapers were more keen on providing details about the exact numbers of protestors being killed or injured in the demonstrations, unlike the local official newspaper. The language of the western press was using a language that is manipulated to reflect their ideologies in the reports they were publishing, especially regarding Iran mediation in Iraq politics.

There was a huge difference in orientation between the two selected local newspapers, one of them was supporting the government ( Al-Sabaah), while the other



was supporting the protestors ( Al-Mada). It shows how the privately owned newspapers can comment on such serious matters more freely than the official governmental one. It shows to the degree of censorship Iraqi government lays on the platforms of press. Neither these two local newspapers have investigated the murders of the protestors and the officials who gave the orders to shoot them down with live ammunition.

To sum up, the two local newspapers look at the same crisis differently. Al-Sabaah newspaper sees that it is the people who are responsible for the violence and the acts of riots, while Al-Mada newspaper blames the government for the killings and the violence. So the first newspaper is biased because it serves, through the discourse it used, ideologies that get along with the government and supporting the ruling political parties in the country.

1. A report on the Syrian crisis could be conducted using an English speaking channel and an Arabic speaking channel.
2. An analysis of the American-Iranian tensions under the Barak Obama and Donald Trump administrations, focusing on English and Persian press.



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